



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

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# News Release

## **MAN INVOLVED IN HIGHLY PUBLICIZED INTERNATIONAL KIDNAPPING AND HOMICIDE CASE DEPORTED TO ITALY**

LOS ANGELES – An Italian man convicted of kidnapping his daughter from Southern California, who allegedly killed his daughter’s mother in an altercation after she flew to Rome to retrieve the child, has been returned to Italy, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials announced today.

Carlo Alberto Ventre, 57, was deported to Italy Wednesday where he was questioned by Italian authorities upon his arrival and released. Ventre is still facing homicide charges in Italy related to the July 1998 death of his daughter’s mother, Toni Dykstra. Dykstra was found dead in Ventre’s Rome apartment. Ventre has claimed he killed Dykstra in self-defense after she attacked him with an ax. Prior to her death, the Southern California woman had told authorities numerous times that Ventre was threatening to kill her.

Ventre, who was a legal permanent resident of the United States, returned to Los Angeles in December 1999 after the courts awarded custody of his daughter to the slain woman’s father under the Hague Convention. Shortly after returning to the United States, Ventre was convicted on international parental kidnapping charges.

After serving a 364-day sentence stemming from that conviction, Ventre was turned over to ICE in April 2002. He had been held by ICE without bond while he fought efforts to deport him. In November 2002, an immigration judge found Ventre deportable and the Board of Immigration Appeals sided with that finding. Three weeks ago, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, which is considering Ventre’s case, lifted a stay of removal clearing the way for his return.

“Ventre’s deportation is an important legal victory for the United States and for ICE,” said John Salter, chief counsel for ICE in Los Angeles. “This sends a message that those who flout international laws set up to protect children will not receive sanctuary in this country.”

Ventre’s removal to Italy was applauded by prominent Los Angeles attorney Gloria Allred, who represented Dykstra’s father and step-mother in the battle for custody of Dykstra’s daughter, Santana.

“I want to commend ICE for their work on this case. When Carlo Ventre was about to be released from federal prison, I contacted the agency and they quickly took him into custody and worked aggressively to gain his deportation,” Allred said. “I believe ICE’s actions may have saved lives. One of the factors the immigration judge considered in making her decision on this case was evidence that while Carlos Ventre was in ICE custody he attempted to solicit the murder of my clients, the child’s grandparents, who had fought for custody of the young girl after her mother’s death.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*